

Introduction

The Electoral Commission is mandated under Article 61 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995 (as amended) to organize, conduct and supervise regular free, fair elections and referenda.

Stages in the electoral process

The stages in the electoral process include; Demarcation of electoral areas, Re-organization of polling stations, Registration of voters, Update of the National Voters' register, Display of the National Voters Register, Nomination of candidates, Campaigns and Polling.

Demarcation of electoral areas

Demarcation of electoral areas is the creation of electoral boundaries for representation of the people. It is done in case of creation of new constituencies, districts, subcounties and parishes.

The purpose of demarcation of electoral areas is to help in determining the number of elective positions for representation.

Re-organization of polling stations

This is the process of harmonizing polling stations for easy accessibility by voters.

The importance of re-organization of polling stations is to;

- Reduce the distance voters walk to reach polling stations,

- Decongest polling centres hence creating enough space for each polling station,
- Ensure that voters are rightfully placed in parishes, villages/cells and polling stations,
- Ensure that each polling station is located in an open and accessible area, and
- Ensure that each parish/ward has at least one polling station.

Registration/Update of the National Voters' Register

Update of the register is conducted before an election or a by-election. This is done to enable new applicants register as voters and also allow those who wish to transfer to new voting locations.

The requirements for registration as a voter include;

- Aged 18 years and above,
- Citizen of Uganda and
- Originating from or residing in that parish or ward.

You need to register as a voter in order to;

- Vote for a candidate of your choice,
- Contest for an elective position,
- Propose the nomination of a candidate, Second or support the nomination of a candidate and
- Raise objections or petitions related to elections.

Display of the National Voters' Register

Before any election is held, display of the National Voters' register is conducted at every polling station for not less than twenty one days. In case of a by-election display is conducted for 10 days. This is to enable the public to scrutinize the register for any corrections and objections or complaints raised.

The purpose of the display exercise is to;

- Allow voters check the correctness of their particulars,
- Confirm that voter's photos appear against their correct particulars and
- Recommend deletions of the dead, the under age, multiple registration and those who neither reside nor originate from the parish/ward.

Voters are encouraged to turn up during the display of the register to confirm and correct their particulars.

Nomination of candidates

Nomination of candidates is the process by which aspiring candidates for elective offices present their duly filled nomination papers to the Returning Officer for verification. Aspiring candidates who meet the nomination requirements are declared duly nominated candidates to contest for an elective office.

Campaigns

Campaign is the period during which candidates meet voters and solicit for votes

Voters are encouraged to attend campaign meetings in order to;

- Compare programmes and manifestos of the candidates in order to make informed choices

Responsibilities of candidates during campaigns

Candidates should;

- Adhere to the laws and guidelines governing campaigns,
- Respect one another,
- Tolerate other candidates' political views,
- Follow the harmonized campaign programme,
- Avoid malicious and sectarian statements and
- Not to disrupt campaigns of other candidates.

Polling day

It is the day when voters cast their votes for candidates of their choice.

On polling day voters are expected to;

- Turn up to vote,
- Keep time for voting (7:00a.m- 4:00p.m) voters who will be in line by 4:00pm will be allowed to vote,
- Witness opening of polls, counting of votes and announcing of results,
- Join the line and wait for your turn to vote,

- Mark the ballot paper with either a tick or a thumbprint and
- Ensure that the authorized mark of choice does not cross into another candidates box.

Stakeholders in the electoral process

The stakeholders in the electoral process include among others;

- Electoral Commission
- Government
- Uganda Police
- Political parties/Organizations
- Development partners
- Voters
- Media
- Candidates agents
- Civil Society Organizations

Role of Political Parties/Organisations in the electoral process

- Mobilize the electorate to effectively participate in electoral activities,
- Endorse nomination papers for party candidates,
- Sponsor candidates for nomination,
- Solicit for votes for their candidates,
- Conduct a non sectarian campaign and
- Appoint in writing party agents to observe elections



FACTS ABOUT THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

